[TFR 34-1]

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Received by mail 5 August 1953. Translation from English.

128.

The Embassy of the United States of America refers to the Ministry's demarches of 30 July and 4 August 1953 concerning the shooting down by Soviet aircraft on 29 July of a United States Air Force RB-50 airplane over the Sea of Japan, as well as to the Embassy's memorandum on this subject given to the Ministry on 31 July.

In the demarches referenced, the Soviet Government alleges that the American RB-50 airplane violated the border of the Soviet Union, that this aircraft opened fire on two Soviet aircraft, and that the Soviet fighters then returned fire after which the American aircraft turned away towards the sea.

These allegations are in complete contradiction with the facts of the case, as established by a thorough investigation undertaken by American authorities, including the interrogation of the RB-50 co-pilot Captain Dzhon E. Roche [John E. Roche], who was rescued by a United States vessel. The investigation confirms, that the American aircraft, performing a routine navigational training flight over the Sea of Japan, was attacked by Soviet MIG-15s at 6:15 local time on 29 July. At the time the Soviet aircraft attacked, the American RB-50 was flying at an altitude of 20,000 feet at 42 degrees 05 minutes north latitude and 133 degrees 02 minutes east longitude, over international waters, approximately

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40 statute miles to the south-east of the nearest Soviet territory - Cape Povorotnyj. These coordinates were entered by the navigator using radar just prior to the attack.

According to the testimony of an eyewitness - Captain Roche, this unjustified attack on the RB-50 was a complete surprise, since the American aircraft was flying over recognized international waters and the attacking Soviet fighters gave no warning by means of such generally used signals, such as wing signals or firing across the aircraft's nose. The first indication of the presence of Soviet fighters was the attack of the MIG-15 on the American RB-50, resulting in one of the motors being engulfed in flames. It was only after the attack that the crew of the RB-50 opened fire on the Soviet fighters in self- defense. Immediately after the first attack, the MIG-15 again opened fire, resulting in the disabling of the second RB-50 engine and setting the wing on fire. As the aircraft started to spin into the sea, the signal was given to abandon the aircraft and the aircrew members began to bail out.

The copilot, Captain Roche, was observed in the water by an American rescue aircraft at approximately 6:00 P.M. on 29 July. When he was picked up by an American surface vessel 11 hours later, he was near 42 degrees 21 minutes north latitude and 132 degrees 44 minutes east longitude. At the time Captain Roche was sighted, 12 Soviet "PT" type vessels were seen

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in this area, obviously picking up other survivors of the crash.

One of the American rescue aircraft dropped a lifeboat to a group of four survivors, located at point 42 degrees 14 minutes north latitude and 132 degrees 59 minutes east longitude at 5:50 P.M. on 29 July. The pilot of the American rescue aircraft saw these four survivors approaching the lifeboat. A second group of three people, was detected approximately one-half mile east of the area where the life boat was dropped. Further search and rescue was halted because of fog and darkness.

Names and service numbers of the RB-50 crew, excluding Captain Roche are as follows:

Stehnli Kit O'Kelli [Stanley Keith O'Kelly], Captain, AO 776002
Edmund Joseph Shiz [Edmund Joseph Czyz], 1Lt., AO 2072656
Llojd Kaliton Wiggins [Lloyd Calyton Wiggins], 1Lt. AO 695999
James Gordon Kit [James Gordon Keith], 1Lt., AO 2092926
Warren John Sanderson, 1Lt., AO 2066184
Robert Eldon Stalnehjker [Robert Eldon Stalnaker], 1Lt., AO 761337
John Sajrus Word [John Cyrus Ward], Captain, AO 865270
Frantsisko Joseph Tedzheda [Francisco Joseph Tejeda], Major, AO 726704
Frank Ehrnst Bejer [Frank Ernest Beyer], 1Lt., AO 2093286
Frehnsiz Lyuter Braun [Francis Luther Brown], TSgt, AF 19053497
Donal'd Uehjn Gabri [Donald Ewing Gabree], SSgt, AF 19333787
Roland Ehdgar Gulet [Roland Edgar Goulet], A1C, AF 12323933
James Edwin Woods, A1C, AF 24413122
Charlis Joseph Rassal [Charles Joseph Russel], A1C, AF 13351658
Donal'd Dzhordzh Khill [Donald George Hill], SSgt, AF 19353976
Ehrl Vilbur Radelin [Earl Wilbur Radlein ,Jr.], A2C, AF 14370732

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[TFR 34-4]

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In view of the facts presented above, the Embassy is instructed to reject the allegations contained in the Ministry's demarches under reference as unfounded, announce its emphatic protest against this unprovoked attack on the American RB-50, and request suitable compensation for the aircraft and for each crew member, who may have died as a result of this attack by Soviet fighters.

In addition, the Soviet government is further requested, taking into account the detailed information furnished herein, to undertake a thorough investigation regarding the surviving crew members of the US RB-50, and immediately report all information that will be obtained as a result of this investigation.

American Embassy
Moscow, 5 August 1953.

Translator: [signature]
(E. Alekseeva)

Distribution: Molotov
Vyshinskij
Gromykov
Zoren
Polken
Podtserob
Il'ichev

DVO,
Case file (2)
Entry þ U7 (nv)

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[handwritten on reverse "Fond cite-AVP RF, fond 0129, list 37, folder 268, box 46, pages 82-85."]